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WHY NO WI-FI?

COMMUNICATION

Councillor to resume fight for free public Internet in T.O.

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

Josh Matlow is a councillor in Canada's largest city, but he still can't walk outside his office, log on to Wi-Fi and check his email.

That needs to change, he says.

Matlow, who led an unsuccessful bid for Wi-Fi hot spots downtown two years ago, is getting set to renew the fight as part of a larger proposal to make Toronto a tech hub.

"It's an equity issue," he said. "While many of us take for granted that we have Wi-Fi in our homes … there are many in the city who don't have the same access. There are children in the city who don't have the same access."

Matlow's original proposal, which focused on city parks and public places such as Nathan Phillips Square, was undone by what he refers to as the "anti-Wi-Fi lobby," a group of residents concerned about the potential health effects of wireless Internet.

"To their credit, they made very articulate but, in my view, fear-based deputations" to a city committee, Matlow said.

Since then, numerous cities across North America have rolled out free public Wi-Fi. Some have even laid their own fibre-optic cables and formed public Internet service providers, said Josh Tabish, a campaign manager with Internet advocacy group Open Media.

In New York, old pay phones have been turned into Wi-Fi hot spots and Mayor Bill de Blasio has vowed to blanket the Big Apple in wireless Internet by 2025.

But in Toronto, progress continues to move at dial-up speed.

While he acknowledged there have been gains — notably adding Wi-Fi to some subway stations and TTC vehicles — Matlow says Toronto can't afford any more Wi-Fi lag.

"Whether we like it or not, we're in a tech-centric world," he said. "And the cities that are tech-centric are the ones that are successful."

Tabish called free municipal Wi-Fi a "no-brainer," adding it can serve as a revenue tool for cities.

At the very least, Matlow said, adding Wi-Fi to downtown Toronto could be done on a cost-recovery basis by partnering with advertisers or telecom companies, .

Tabish said the benefits for cities have been well documented.

In Stratford, the Rhyzome Networks project is credited with bringing 740 technology jobs to the city, and a similar initiative in Fredericton has attracted new businesses.

"It's also a big win for tourists and tourism," Tabish said. "People coming in from out of town can stay connected."

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MEDIA

Latest newspaper survey results revealed

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

One of Metro's strengths is connecting with commuters. In Calgary, for example, where readership is 139,300 daily, its presence on transit is hard to miss. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

Metro is becoming the go-to news source for young Canadians.

Almost 3 million people read Metro once a week, and more than 1.2 million are daily readers, data released Wednesday by NADbank shows.

Some 60 per cent — or 740,000 — of the daily 1.2 million readers are between the ages of 18 and 49, with the most living in major hubs stretching from Vancouver to Halifax.

It's proof that Metro "owns the younger urban market in Canada," said vice-president and editor-in-chief Cathrin Bradbury.

"People are choosing Metro because it's a reflection of their lives, and the cities they call home," Bradbury said. "It is the paper that best captures the essence of what they're passionate about and explains the issues they face."

John Cruickshank, publisher of the Toronto Star and president of Star Metro Media Group, said he's thrilled with Metro's readership growth in a number of cities, particularly those in Western Canada.

"While the capacity of others to cover the market shrinks, Metro – because it's focused on news delivery – will continue to rise in these crucial markets," he said.

The paper's appeal to younger people helps complement other Star Metro Media products, he said.

"What we have with the Star and Metro is the ability to speak across a very great breadth of the audience."

Metro is well positioned for future growth as more people move to urban centres, Bradbury said.

> **What we have with the Star and Metro is the ability to speak across a very great breadth of the audience.**
> John Cruickshank, president of Star Media Group

According to Statistics Canada, 81 per cent of people now live in urban areas. The divide is even more pronounced among the young, with only 17 per cent of 15- to 29-year-olds living in rural Canada.

Metro has made recent investments to expand editorial coverage of local news in each of its seven markets, Bradbury said. Plus, Metro updated its look in March with a modern redesign that takes delivering essential daily news to the next level.

"We want people to tuck the paper under their arms with pride," Bradbury said.

HEALTH

Province to expand Motherisk probe

The province is expanding the scope of the independent probe into problems at the Hospital for Sick Children's Motherisk Drug Testing Laboratory.

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services has also directed children's aid societies to "immediately stop relying on" hair drug and alcohol testing in the course of child protection proceedings, the province said in a news release Wednesday, amid an ongoing Star investigation.

The province has expanded the scope of the review from hair tests to include hair drug and alcohol tests from 2005 to 2015. It will also "consider other matters related to the operation of the laboratory as appropriate," according to the press release.

The final report by retired Appeal Court justice Susan Lang is now expected in December.

"It is critically important that the institutions upon which our justice system relies are held to an extremely high standard," Attorney General Madeleine Meilleur said in the release. "Our families and our children deserve no less."

Calls have been mounting for months for a wider look at the concerns that prompted the province to launch an independent review in November of five years' worth of hair drug and alcohol tests performed by Motherisk from 2005 to 2010, and used in criminal and child protection proceedings.

Motherisk's hair drug and alcohol tests have been used as evidence in cases across the country, generally as proof of parental substance abuse. The results have influenced an unknown number of child custody decisions.

Sick Kids announced last week that it is permanently closing all non-research operations of the Motherisk lab, including hair alcohol and drug testing. The hospital temporarily suspended hair drug and alcohol testing in March after an internal review and Lang's review uncovered new information. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

IN BRIEF

Altercation with officer results in cut hand for man

Peel police say an officer fired a shot Wednesday but missed, during an altercation with a "emotionally disturbed" man in Brampton.

Peel police spokeswoman Lilly Fitzpatrick says the man had a "superficial cut to his hand" and no officers were injured.

Police were called to a home at 1:27 p.m. Wednesday from a mother who was concerned about her "emotionally disturbed" son.

The man was armed with a knife when officers arrived and an "altercation" occurred, Fitzpatrick said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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BRAMPTON

Campaign raising $10K for child's funeral

A fundraising campaign has begun to help the mother of little Victoria O'Dea, the 21-month-old Brampton girl whose death Monday night led to the arrest of her father.

The gofundme campaign has a $10,000 target to help pay for the youngster's funeral.

"We are seeking assistance on behalf of her mother, Hilary, who did not get a chance to say goodbye to her beautiful daughter, and is unable to afford the expenses of the funeral," according to the page.

Victoria O'Dea. CONTRIBUTED

Family friends called the girl a "sweet child" who was loved very much by her mother and everyone who knew her during her "short life."

As of Wednesday afternoon, more than $550 had been donated by 11 donors.

Meanwhile, the girl's father, Frank Brian O'Dea, is in jail awaiting a bail hearing, which has been put over to Friday. He has been charged with criminal negligence causing death.

Depending on the results of an autopsy, the charge against O'Dea could change, say police.

Police were called to a basement apartment on Pappain Crescent in the area of Hurontario Street and Wanless Drive at 11:25 p.m. Monday. O'Dea had called 9-1-1 to report his daughter had no vital signs. She was rushed to hospital, but attempts to revive her were unsuccessful.

Tuesday, O'Dea was arrested and charged by Peel's Homicide Bureau. BRAMPTON GUARDIAN/ TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Starting May 4, there will be changes to most Barrie, Kitchener and Milton GO Train schedules and connecting buses.

Two weekday Lakeshore East trips will also change.

There will be some earlier departures so be sure to check your new schedule.

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Pour plus de reseignements, veuillez visiter le site gotransit.com.

METROLINX

Grace Jin is a Grade 11 member of the Organization of Ontario Secondary Students, a grassroots organization fighting to keep students a priority in teacher strike negotiations. COLE BURSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

'Pawns in a major game'

EDUCATION

Students feel caught in the middle of teacher strikes

A grassroots group of high-school students is seeking face-to-face meetings with teachers' unions, school boards and Queen's Park officials to ensure their interests aren't lost as labour unrest rolls out across the province's schools.

The Organization of Ontario Secondary Students (OOSS) was formed two years ago during the provincewide teachers' boycott of extracurricular programs.

It plans to send written requests Thursday for meetings with the Durham District School Board and its striking local teachers' union, as well as the provincial umbrella groups that represent both, "to ensure they're working towards students' best interests," said Roman Ebadi, 16, president and co-founder of OOSS.

"We feel like students are pawns in a major game of chess being played by the government and the union, because strikes are hindering our education and our growth and development," said Ebadi, a Grade 11 student at Hamilton's Westmount Secondary School.

He said his group wants answers to growing concerns about how strikes could affect final marks, year-end field trips, sports events and proms at the seven local school boards targeted for walkouts by the teachers' union.

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) is at a central bargaining table with the Ontario Public School Boards' Association and Ministry of Education to hammer out deals on big-ticket items such as wages and benefits, while local school boards and unions work on agreements on non-monetary issues. The more formalized two-tiered bargaining system is being tried for the first time.

However, the OSSTF says slow progress and attempts by school boards to strip back elements of the current contract have provoked it to target seven local school boards for strikes, starting with Durham, where some 1,600 teachers walked off the job Monday, leaving 24,000 students without classes. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

IN BRIEF

Missing woman found

A Toronto student who had been missing since Monday has been found, police said.

Asmaa Bana, 20, of the Ontario College of Arts and Design, told friends she was going to a job interview but dropped out of sight.

Her family became worried when she deactivated most of her social-media accounts and appealed to her to come home.

However, police said Bana was located at 5 p.m. Wednesday. METRO

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T.O. does have houses for under $500K — they're just not that big

REAL ESTATE

Three couples who found some 'condo alternatives'

Toronto's real estate market has become a brutal battleground, but here are some victors who managed to get a house for under $500,000.

Realtors call them "condo alternatives" — houses that may not offer the space and prime locations that a whole generation of baby boomers came to take for granted.

But they do offer a backyard and one or two bedrooms at well below the average sale price in the GTA, which hit a record $613,933 in March.

Even the average GTA condo sale price hit $372,827 last month and is poised to surpass $400,000 in the city of Toronto for the first time.

These often tiny, imperfect houses — especially if they are within reasonable distance of major transit lines and shopping — are quickly disappearing and in high demand from first-time buyers, flippers and investors looking for a cheap rental property.

Surprisingly, about 90 houses sold for under $500,000 in the sought-after 416 region in the first two weeks of April's peak spring buying market.

Admittedly, most were in areas once considered a tough sell.

Meet three happy — if nervous — couples who defied the odds and found a decent house to call home with a reasonable commute to the core:

'As is' on Keele Street

SOLD: $430,000
LIST PRICE: $449,000
WHERE: Keele Street halfway between St. Clair and Eglinton avenues.
WHAT THEY GOT: Detached with no parking, 3 bedrooms, 1 bathroom in "as is" condition, a 20-by-100-foot lot.
HOW: Savings and proceeds from sale of condo at Don Mills and Sheppard.

Justin Lau, 29, and his girlfriend Inge Boerma, 25, lost seven bidding wars in the east end before looking west. This house is on a busy street and needs work.

But it's halfway between the St. Clair streetcar line and new Eglinton LRT, a 45-minute drive to Lau's Richmond Hill project management job and a 10-kilometre bike ride from Boerma's fitness-related work downtown.

"I can't believe a house that size is half a million dollars, but that's what people are paying.

"I'm not too concerned that Toronto's housing market is going to crash, but there may be a pullback," Lau said.

Inge Boerma and Justin Lau got their house at $19,000 under asking. CONTRIBUTED

Alison Britt and Simon Grossman beat six bidders at $35,100 over asking. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Main and Danforth pricing not so scary

SOLD: $435,000
LIST PRICE: $399,900
WHERE: Balfour Avenue in Danforth and Main Street area.
WHAT THEY GOT: Semi-detached, no parking, 2+ bedrooms, 1 bathroom, a 12.5-by-100-foot lot.
HOW: Savings, down payment help from dad, needed CMHC insurance.

Web developer Simon Grossman, 35, and his fiancée Alison Britt, 34, a U of T arts major, lost out on five properties before beating out six bidders in March for this semi that's close to the subway and the Main GO Station.

The couple saw "lots of really scary houses" under half a million.

They won despite making their offer conditional on replacement of an outdated electrical box.

"The trick for us was finding a place where we would be comfortable if the market crashed and we were stuck there for 30 years.

"This is a tiny place — it looked much bigger in the pictures — but it's cozy," said Grossman.

Fixer-upper at St. Clair and Caledonia better than nothing

SOLD: $495,000
LIST PRICE: $499,000
WHERE: Rockwell Avenue in St. Clair and Caledonia area.
WHAT THEY GOT: Semi-detached, mutual drive, 3+ bedrooms, 3 bathrooms on 17.5-by-100-foot lot.
HOW: RRSPs, TSFAs, money from their September wedding.

This semi showed poorly when newlyweds Shae Greenfield, 32, who works for the province, and his wife Sara, 29, who works for a non-profit, went to see it April 2 after 40+ days on market. They considered it a plus that the house needs work and the area is in transition. They made an offer that night, good for just two hours, after the price dropped from $509,000.

"We talked about holding off and saving up more money to be able to buy more house, but at the rate house prices are climbing, we felt we'd probably end up moving backwards," said Sara Greenfield.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sara and Shae Greenfield paid $4,000 under asking for their house, which was on the market for 40+ days. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

BOOM TOWN

Big Apple of the north?
The spring market in the Toronto area has been especially frantic the past two or three years as first-time buyers grow more concerned that a housing correction isn't coming anytime soon and they'll have to jump in before prices climb even further out of reach.

At the same time, listings have seriously lagged behind demand.

That supply-demand imbalance helped push home prices up 10 per cent year over year in March.

Breaking into Toronto's housing market has become far tougher than ever, according to research compiled for the Star by TD Economics economist Diana Petramala. She was co-author of a recent TD report that warned the GTA is fast becoming the Big Apple of the north, thanks to a decade-long housing boom that has eroded affordability.

Back in March of 1996, the average GTA home price was just $196,476 — about $280,394 in today's dollars.

The average GTA income back then was $49,374 — just over $70,000 when inflation is factored in. While annual incomes were much lower among young buyers aged 25 to 34 and 35 to 44, at an average of $27,879 and $35,367 respectively (that equates to annual salaries today of $39,789 and $50,473), they were still enough to make home ownership a real possibility.

As of this March, however, the average GTA home price hit $613,933.

But that includes resale condos, which now account for a considerable portion of overall GTA home sales and distract from the fact that the average price of a fully detached house in the 416 and 905 regions combined was $787,388 last month — and over $1 million in the sought-after city of Toronto.

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Calorie deficit taking its toll

CHALLENGE DAY 3

Metro reporter feels his energy flagging on a $1.75-a-day diet

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

There are those daily routines in life that you seldom expect to change.

Like the 30 or so pushups I do every morning before taking a shower. I've been doing that for so long that I don't even think about it. But since taking on the Live Below the Line challenge this week, I've started to feel my body letting me down.

It started Tuesday evening on my way home from work. As I sat on the train, I started reading an ESPN column that I had downloaded earlier about the NBA playoffs. That's what I do every day on my commute. But this time, I kept falling asleep before finishing two paragraphs. After many failed attempts, I pulled a book out of my bag, thinking my eyes were just tired of looking at screens. But I couldn't finish a page before dozing off.

It's not as if I was overly tired from work. Instead, it's a testament to the physical, emotional and mental toll that not eating enough can take on you.

I had lunched on a meagre meal of bean soup and a piece of pita bread, the same thing I planned to eat for dinner. The previous night, I had woken up on multiple occasions, checking the time and realizing I was still hours from starting my morning routine. And a sense of emptiness in my whole body kept reminding me that I was hungry. When it was finally time to get out of bed, I felt so weak I didn't even try for a few pushups.

Nutritionist Theresa Albert was shocked when I told her what I've been eating.

"Very poor diet," she said, advising that I need regular nourishment and more varied foods, as well as enough calories.

Studies show that men aged 19 to 30 should consume at least 2,400 calories a day to maintain a healthy body. With $1.75 as a daily food budget, I'm not even getting half of that.

If I continued on this diet for an extended period of time, some critical processes in my body would start to shut down, such as my brain and immune system, Albert told me.

It made me think of all the kids from poor families, going to school with half-empty stomachs. If I can't concentrate on reading a piece of news after only two days on this challenge, how are they going to sit in a class all day and follow their teachers?

The World Food Program estimates that more than three million children around the world die each year as a result of poor nutrition, and that more than 800 million people are going hungry. The hunger I'm feeling during this challenge serves as a reminder to appreciate life the way I know it.

LIVING BELOW THE LINE

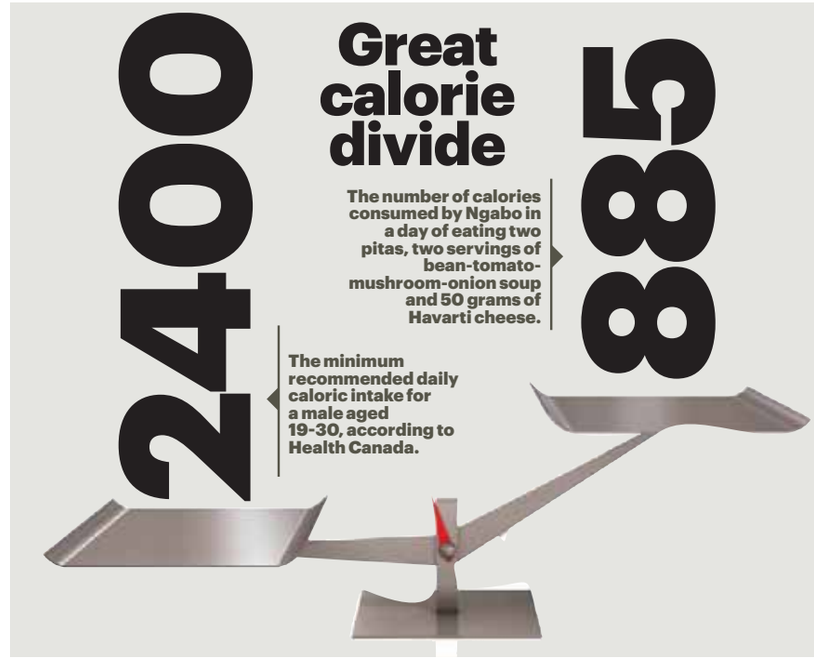
The reporter: Gilbert Ngabo works for Metro in Toronto. He moved to Canada from Rwanda five years ago.

The mission: To live on just $1.75 a day for five days — a challenge made to all Canadians by the Global Poverty Project, which says that's the daily budget of those who live below the poverty line.

The series: Day 3 of 5, a tired Gilbert Ngabo sizes up his diet on $1.75 versus the ideal diet.

Follow Gilbert Ngabo on Twitter @dugilbo or at metronews.ca.

BY THE NUMBERS Health Canada versus the $1.75 diet


2400
Great calorie divide
1850
The number of calories consumed by Ngabo in a day of eating two pitas, two servings of bean-tomato-mushroom-onion soup and 50 grams of Havarti cheese.
The minimum recommended daily caloric intake for a male aged 19-30, according to Health Canada.

Premier Kathleen Wynne takes the controls of the Union Pearson Express train from Union Station to Pearson airport in Toronto on Wednesday. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Union-to-Pearson train starts June 6

TRANSPORT

Service will remove 1.2M car trips to airport in first year

Travellers to Canada's biggest city finally have a quick way to downtown Toronto via an express train between Pearson International Airport and Union Station that starts running just in time for this summer's PanAm Games.

For the first time, a train will directly link Pearson to downtown Union Station starting June 6, Premier Kathleen Wynne said Wednesday.

Pearson and Union Station are already the country's two busiest transportation hubs, said Wynne, and linking them is expected to eliminate about 1.2 million car trips to the airport in its first year.

> **This is more convenient than any other option to get from Union Station to the airport or vice versa.**
> Premier Kathleen Wynne

The Union-Pearson Express should also help ease gridlock, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and bolster Ontario's global competitiveness, Wynne said, as Toronto joins the ranks of many other major cities worldwide that have rail service from their airports.

"The UP Express will also give the hundreds of thousands of people who will arrive here this summer for the Pan Am and ParaPan Am Games a fantastic first impression," she said.

By 2031, 190 million travellers per year are expected to ride the UP express, Wynne said. It's been designed with the capacity to handle that growth, she said.

"The only way people will take a transit option is if it is more convenient than driving," the premier said. "This is more convenient than any other option to get from Union Station to the airport or vice versa."

The Union-Pearson Express trip will take 25 minutes each way, with trains running every 15 minutes for 19-1/2 hours each day. The ticket for the 25-minute ride will cost $27.50 cash each way or $19 with a Presto transit card, with other discounts offered for students and seniors.

The trains will initially run on diesel, Wynne said, but will later be converted to electric.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

SNC-led group wins Crosslinx light rail contract

A consortium that includes SNC-Lavalin has been selected by the Ontario government as the preferred bidder for Toronto's multibillion-dollar Eglinton light rail transit contract, sources say.

The Crosslinx Transit Solution group is a mix of Canadian and international partners, including SNC, Aecon, EllisDon, ACS Infrastructure Canada, Dragrados and IBI Group. THE CANADIAN PRESS

BUSINESS

Breweries concerned about Beer Store deal

Some of Ontario's small brewers worry the government's new deal with the Beer Store that promises to nearly triple their shelf space in the company's 447 retail outlets won't achieve that goal.

Under the province's revised agreement with the foreign-owned Beer Store, the amount of shelf space for products from small and craft brewers is supposed to grow from seven to 20 per cent.

However, Matt Johnston of Collective Arts Brewing says the increased shelf space will apply only to 100 self-serve stores, not the majority of regular Beer Stores where the product is kept out of sight, behind the counter.

Asked if small brewers will get 20 per cent of the warehouse or cooler space behind the Beer Store's cash registers, the Ministry of Finance said "logistics are still under consideration."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

LATEST TECHNOLOGY

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City hall social media snub

TWEETS

Minnan-Wong calls out Keesmaat for Twitter block

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

There was tension on Twitter in Toronto Wednesday between two prominent figures, but it all seems to have ended well.

Deputy Mayor Coun. Denzil Minnan-Wong snarkily called out Toronto's chief planner Wednesday morning for blocking him on Twitter.

"@jen_keesmat has blocked the Deputy Mayor from following her tweets. Any reason Madame Chief Planner? #topoli" he tweeted on Wednesday morning.

He then sent the tweet again, this time properly spelling Jennifer Keesmaat's last name.

Minnan-Wong scrummed with reporters about the issue at City Hall, asking again why she would block him. Keesmaat is popular on Twitter. She tweets about urban planning and Toronto and has more than 20,000 followers. His past tweets to Keesmaat are still available online.

Some, dug up by the Torontoist, were insulting. For example, he questioned her expertise on how long subways take to building, by tweeting to his 6,500 followers, "Chief Planner estimating construction time of subway like Medical Officer of Health opining on best way to fill potholes."

He also belittled a comment she made about making sure Toronto's infrastructure is ready for the effects of global warming, by tweeting that it was "a Deep Thought worthy of (comedian) Jack Handey" which he hashtagged, "#SaturdayNightLive."

Keesmaat responded by unblocking Minnan-Wong.

"Pleased to have been unblocked by Chief Planner @jen_keesmaat. Looking forward to reading her tweets as it relates to city planning," he tweeted.

Denzil Minnan-Wong and Jennifer Keesmaat.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

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TORONTO
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GREEN SPACE

City has untapped potential for parks

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

If Toronto wants to grow its green space, it'll have to start thinking outside the park, says a new study.

On Wednesday, Toronto Park People launched a report entitled Making Connections.

The 64-page document examines the state of Toronto's parks and looks at ways to expand green space in a city where space itself is at a premium.

"We don't have too many opportunities to build big parks anymore," said the study's author, Jake Tobin Garrett.

"So we want to take that park experience and pull it throughout the city."

While it's unlikely the city will build another High Park or Christie Pitts, Garrett said there's still plenty of untapped park potential in Toronto.

"Right now in the city's official plan, we don't recognize laneways or public rights of way as opportunities to create parks and open spaces," he said.

Garrett wants the city to connect its roughly 1,600 parks, creating networks of green spaces that span the city.

He points to similar initiatives elsewhere in Canada, including Vancouver, where leafy pedestrian pathways connect downtown parks to the city's massive Stanley Park.

1600

The estimated number of parks and parkettes in Toronto.
METRO

"They actually bumped out the sidewalks space into the streets to create gardens and seating areas," he said.

Another suggestion contained in the report is to limit the height of new buildings to prevent sunny parks from being thrown into the shade. A similar law is on the books in San Francisco, Garrett said.

For more information, visit parkpeople.ca.

People walking the Orchard Trail in Rouge Park.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTO

JP Stringham, a.k.a. Saturn, is the lead guitarist for The Blast Processors, a Toronto band that plays music made popular in video games. CONTRIBUTED

Geek out and get your groove on

NOSTALGIC NIGHT

TO bands take video game music to whole new level

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

An upcoming showcase of two Toronto bands will satisfy all your nerd nostalgia for the beeps and boops of old-school video games.

An e-sports convention coming to the International Centre next month will feature Philadelphia's Dj CUTMAN, who plays the chiptune, or 8-bit, music of old computers and gaming systems, along with two Toronto bands that play video game music: The Blast Procesors and Epic Games Music.

DETAILS

Convention
Enthusiast Gaming Live will be at the International Centre in Mississauga on May 16 and 17. There will be competitions in 14 eSports, including Dota 2 and League of Legends.

Julian Spillane does lead vocals, synths and arrangements for The Blast Processors, which plays songs based on the music of Sega Genesis games. He says video game music is a growing international trend that's part of the current "geek zeitgeist."

"We are at a point where the blockbuster movies, the biggest, largest films, are based on comic book and some of the largest franchises are video game franchises, be they Call of Duty or Highlander," he said. "Money is being poured into this and finally, being a geek is celebrated. I think that's evident in the amount of geek-related media that is coming out."

His band takes the 30 to 50 second loops of the old video game music, and extends them into five-minute songs, adding epic storytelling lyrics.

"We took the final battle theme from the second Sonic the Hedgehog game from 1991, which is a very bombastic military march, and turned into in a spoken-word, almost Disney-esque villain song," Spillane said. "We pull a lot of tropes of rock and metal opera."

It tends to go over especially well in front of crowds that recognize the game riffs and react loudly to them, he said.

"They'll hear melodic cues and telling chords and get very excited," he said.

COMEDY

'Learn while you laugh' at new Annex show

More laughter is coming to the Annex, with the opening of a new entertainment showcase next month. Live From The Annex is a new comedy cabaret series that promises to combine both comedy and live music from local artists, bringing more vibe in the neighbourhood.

"This will be unscripted comedy, creative and spontaneous storytelling," said Brian Smith, improvised comedy instructor at the Centre for Social Innovation and creative director of the new project. "It'll be comedy unplugged."

Members of the group, most of them already involved in CSI activities, will look to use the show as a cultural and technological experiment, he said. The idea is to engage the youth and other community members online, with people jumping into the action on social media platforms to share ideas and constructive criticism, he added.

> **It will be comedy unplugged.**
> Brian Smith

Every show will be live broadcast on Dailymotion channel, in an attempt to reach a wider audience from across the globe, he said. Smith said members of their audience will get a chance to learn more about how comedy is produced. In what is called a visible classroom, directors of the comedy will occasionally pause the action on stage, and explain the creative processes.

"Call it learning while you laugh," said Smith. "There's a lot of talent in the Annex and this will be the chance to explore that talent more."

The opening night is May 5, and the show will run every Tuesday throughout the year.

GILBERT NGABO/METRO

Lakeshore West GO Train Service Reduced to Hourly

April 25, 2015

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METROLINX

Kids' triumphant return to stage

BACKSTAGE PASS

Iconic comedy group launches nationwide tour

Ian Gormley
For Metro | Toronto

Never repeat yourself.

That mantra guided Canada's premiere sketch-comedy troupe, The Kids in the Hall, in the early days.

The writing and bouts of creativity — needed to meet their self-imposed rule — instilled a work ethic that helped make them legends. It was also a colossal folly.

"It nearly caused us to break up," says Mark McKinney as he barrels down the QEW. "If you hear a crash and a scream, I'm dead and you've got a scoop."

Thankfully, the group — McKinney, Dave Foley, Bruce McCulloch, Kevin McDonald and Scott Thompson — changed course, launching their first cross-Canada tour in seven years, tonight at the Danforth Music Hall.

Those kids didn't become the Kids until they learned how to "work" their material — to try it with an audience. That approach continues today. They "worked" much of the new material in their current set during runs at the Moontower Comedy Fest in Austin, Tex., and Toronto's own SketchFest.

What has changed is how they write. Originally, 70 per cent of the material that appeared in the Kids in the Hall series came from members showing up with a notion or character, says McKinney. "We'd figure it out from there." But the members no longer live in the same city. "If you happen to be one of the Kids who can do writing as homework, like Bruce and Kevin do, it favours them."

Still, he remains enthusiastic, joking about the bickering that inevitably ensues between the five grown-ups. "It's like going to a junior high school made up of five people and they're all bitches," he says before adulthood forces him to reconsider. "I should redact that 'bitch'. I have a daughter."

The Kids in the Hall, from left, Bruce McCulloch, Kevin McDonald, Dave Foley, Mark McKinney and Scott Thompson are at Danforth Music Hall Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. CONTRIBUTED

UNELECTED

Scott Vrooman to 'run' for Senate

Among a "smorgasbord" of creative projects he has on the go, Mark McKinney is also helping fellow comedian Scott Vrooman run for the Senate, so to speak.

The unelected political body is in the news a lot these days, making it ripe for jokes.

"We have a ridiculous political system in Canada that doesn't get anywhere the amount of satire that it needs," McKinney said.

Vrooman has even singled out several sitting senators to run against on his website vroomanforsenate.com.

"Everyone in Canada wants it, and no one does anything about it," McKinney said. "No one's going to reform the damn thing, so why not have a despotic election?" IAN GORMLEY/FOR METRO

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Ontario Auto Insurance Rates Have Dropped

Could you be saving money?

The Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) reports that auto insurance rates dropped in the fourth quarter of 2014, in some cases by as much as six per cent. Did you see a change? One of the easiest ways to see if you're getting the best deal is by comparing rates using a site like **InsuranceHotline.com**.

Now's the perfect time for drivers to compare rates

Will switching providers save you money?

FSCO predicts lower rates will continue across the province, so now's the perfect time for drivers to compare rates. Insurance premiums are calculated based on a number of factors including your vehicle, your personal driving record, and where you live, so it's possible your rates did not change. If that's the case, or if you've recently moved or gotten a new vehicle, comparing rates today and switching providers could save you money.

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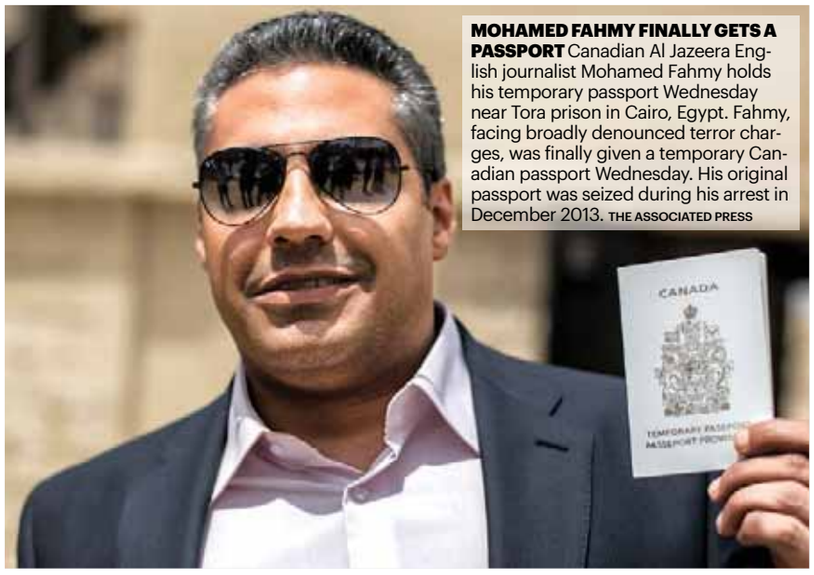

MOHAMED FAHMY FINALLY GETS A PASSPORT Canadian Al Jazeera English journalist Mohamed Fahmy holds his temporary passport Wednesday near Tora prison in Cairo, Egypt. Fahmy, facing broadly denounced terror charges, was finally given a temporary Canadian passport Wednesday. His original passport was seized during his arrest in December 2013. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CRIME

Human-trafficking charges laid

Nine people have been charged and another is sought in a national human-trafficking ring that Toronto police allege saw gang members romance teen girls and women to lure them into prostitution.

Police say the victims are between 15 and 33 years old and come from Ontario, Nova Scotia and Alberta.

Toronto police Insp. Joanna Beaven-Desjardins says they were recruited from dance clubs, group homes and schools as well as online.

The nine accused — six men and three women between the ages of 18 and 32 — face 61 human-trafficking and drug-related charges between them.

Police say another suspect is still at large. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Trudeau hinting at economic plan

POLITICS

Liberal leader promises to balance budget

Justin Trudeau is starting to show some of his economic cards now that the Conservative government has laid its election hand on the table.

The Liberal leader says he would reverse the Tories' plan to almost double the maximum amount Canadians can sock away in their tax-free savings accounts.

And he's promising that the Liberals would balance next year's budget should they win this fall's election.

Trudeau disclosed those details Tuesday, after the Conservatives laid out their economic and fiscal blueprint in the Harper government's 11th federal budget, its last before the October election.

He revealed another on Wednesday: he'd keep the Conservatives' plan to cut the 11 per cent small business tax rate by two points over four years.

However, he said a Liberal government would look at a different way of implementing the cut so that it wouldn't wind up benefiting primarily the wealthy, as many economists have predicted will happen. In addition to those particulars, insiders say Trudeau intends to unveil in the next few weeks a major economic plank from his party's eventual election platform.

Until now, Trudeau has offered sparse details — like promises to scrap the government's income-splitting measure and to roll back the age of eligibility for old age security to 65 from 67 — while steadily resisting pressure to reveal platform proposals before the fall campaign.

With the fiscal lay of the land now clear, he hinted broadly Wednesday that he'll be more forthcoming soon about Liberal economic policy.

In the absence of firm Liberal proposals, Trudeau has been criticized for failing to demonstrate he's got the policy chops to manage the country's economy. And the Conservatives have been repeatedly accusing him of planning to hike taxes and run up deficits. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NDP PLATFORM

NDP Leader Tom Mulcair has been steadily unveiling platform planks since last summer, including plans for a national $15-a-day child care program, reinstatement of a $15-per-hour federal minimum wage and promises to hike corporate taxes and cut small business taxes.

> **Our platform will be fully costed, fiscally responsible and a balanced budget.**
> Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau

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Drone lands on Japan PMO's roof

Authorities probe a drone on the roof of the Japanese prime minister's office. KOTA ENDO/KYODO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SECURITY

Incident raises alarm over potential for terror attacks

Japanese authorities said they were investigating after a small drone laced with traces of radiation was found Wednesday on the roof of the prime minister's office, sparking concerns about drones and their possible use for terrorist attacks.

No injuries or damage were reported from the incident. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was in Indonesia to attend an Asian-African conference.

Police said it was not immediately known who was responsible for the drone. They were investigating the possibility it had crashed during a flight.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said a drone landing at the prime minister's office was a wake-up call to problems caused by the unmanned aerial devices, including the possibility of terrorist attacks when Japan hosts a Group of Seven summit next year or during the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

"There is a possibility that drones might be used for terrorist attacks," Suga said.

The drone was about 1.7 feet in diameter and had four propellers. It carried a small camera and a plastic bottle with unidentified content inside, according to Tokyo police.

It said the bottle is believed to be the source of the radioactive contamination. It also had a symbol that warns of radioactive material.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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CALIFORNIA LAWMAKERS APPROVE MANDATORY VACCINATIONS FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN Tianna Hazard of Oakland wipes tears on Wednesday as she and her nine-month-old daughter leave a hearing at the Capitol in Sacramento, Calif., where lawmakers approved a measure requiring schoolchildren to be vaccinated. The bill was approved by the Senate Education Committee on a 7-2 vote.

RICH PEDRONCELLI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON

Bystanders rescue man from tracks

A man was rescued from the tracks at a Washington Metro station after his wheelchair rolled off the platform.

Surveillance video shows two bystanders jumping onto the tracks to lift the man and his wheelchair back onto the platform Tuesday afternoon at the U Street station.

A Metro spokesman says the nearest train was three stops away when the bystanders jumped onto the tracks.

Metro says the man who fell had a bloody mouth but no other visible injuries.

He was taken to hospital for treatment.

It wasn't clear why the man's motorized wheelchair rolled off the platform.

Metro spokesman Dan Stessel says the man who fell was not in imminent danger of being struck by a train, but the greater hazard was the electrified third rail that powers the trains.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Migrants crowd an inflatable dinghy as rescue vessel Denaro (not pictured) of the Italian Coast Guard approaches them, off the Libyan coast, in the Mediterranean Sea, Wednesday. In the background is a merchant ship. ALESSANDRO DI MEO/ANSA VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Italy needs EU help on migrant crisis

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Some 90% of smugglers' boats leaving from Libya

Italy pressed the EU on Wednesday to devise robust steps to stop the deadly tide of migrants crossing the Mediterranean, including considering military intervention against smugglers and boosting UN refugee offices in countries bordering Libya.

"We know where the smugglers keep their boats, where they gather," said Defence Minister Roberta Pinotti. "The plans for military intervention are there."

Some 90 per cent of smugglers' boats leave from Libya, where the lack of a central authority coupled with extremists affiliated with ISIL have contributed to chaos and lawlessness that have allowed criminal trafficking networks to proliferate.

Pinotti said Italy was willing to take the helm of any military intervention if asked and as long as it is carried out as an international mission, backed by the United Nations.

Pinotti spoke a day before EU leaders hold an emergency summit in Brussels.

Ahead of the summit, Premier Mario Renzi called for EU leaders to approve three key proposals: doubling the resources and assets of the current EU border patrol mission; destroying smugglers' boats and improving co-ordination across the EU for transferring asylum seekers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UN RESPONSE

UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon is urging European leaders to act swiftly to address the growing migrant crisis during their emergency summit Thursday, and he says he will discuss the issue in his audience with Pope Francis next week. Ban's letter to European Council president Donald Tusk urges European Union leaders to consider the UN refugee chief's proposals for a stronger EU search and rescue operation and more legal migration channels. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Anti-piracy firm targets Canada

ILLEGAL DOWNLOADS

U.S.-based company seeks $150 to $450 from users

Megan Haynes
For Metro

An L.A. company is asking thousands of Canadians to cough up hundreds of dollars each for illegally downloading videos, taking advantage of recent changes to the Copyright Act.

CEG TEK, an anti-piracy firm that works on behalf of content owners, has been emailing notices to Canadians via internet service providers (ISPs). The notices allege piracy on the part of the recipients, and offer settlements, which range from $150 to $450, to "prevent legal action." The ISP TekSavvy recently posted a copy of one such notice online, and other recipients have also done so.

But Jake Enwright, press secretary for Industry Canada Minister James Moore, said that, while the notices don't violate Canadian law, "there is no obligation for Canadians to pay these settlements," adding that the ministry's aim is to combat online piracy not by penalizing consumers but by educating them that the practice is illegal and hurts content producers.

In an email interview, Kyle Reed, chief operating officer at CEG TEK, wouldn't confirm how many emails the firm has sent to Canadians or how many recipients have opted to settle. But Bram Abramson, chief legal and regulatory officer at TekSavvy, which has 250,000 customers, said his company forwards approximately 1,300 notices a day, over half of which are from CEG TEK.

Through the end of 2014, copyright holders or their representatives could send infringement notices to ISPs, but the ISPs were not legally required to forward the notices to end users. But changes to the updated Copyright Act, which came into effect on Jan. 1, requires that all infringement notices be forwarded.

Los Angeles-based anti-piracy firm CEG TEK has been sending notices to Canadian users on behalf of their clients via users' internet service providers. The company has asked anyone who illegally downloaded content to compensate the owner. MARC FEMENIA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ SCANPIX

What's more, there is no fee associated with sending these emails, Abramson said, despite lobbying efforts from the ISPs to include a small fee. He says this would prevent sending out mass quantities of emails.

Michael Geist, research chair in Internet and e-commerce law and professor at the University of Ottawa, said ultimately, the cost of setting up auto-forwarding and monitoring of these notices was pushed onto the ISPs, who ultimately will pass these costs on to consumers.

CEG TEK, which began operating in Canada on Jan. 2, 2015, has been active in the U.S. since 2009. It made the news last September when it sent out a blitz of emails on behalf of Millennium Films going after people who illegally downloaded The Expendables 2 and 3, asking for upwards of $300 in settlements, according to media reports. Reed claims CEG TEK's model is the only proven method to decrease content piracy, and claims there has been a reduction in clients' content downloaded here in Canada. "We are unaware of any law or regulation that prohibits presenting a settlement opportunity, and we are unaware of anyone at Industry Canada ever asserting that a notice from CEG TEK was in any way in violation of Canada law," he added.

Stephen Ellis, the co-chairman of the copyright committee at the Canadian Media Producers Association, which fought for stricter changes to the Copyright Act, said going after consumers for a few hundreds dollars isn't the way to curtail piracy.

Rather, he said, efforts should be geared at those profiting from the pirated material by posting them online in the first place.

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FEDERAL BUDGET

PM Harper shrugs off Oliver's comments

Stephen Harper shrugged off controversy Wednesday over his finance minister's assertion that potential future problems created by his budget should be left to the prime minister's granddaughter to solve.

Harper characterized Joe Oliver's comments as a sarcastic bid to dismiss "a clearly preposterous argument" that boosting the maximum amount Canadians can put into tax-free savings accounts will drain billions from the federal treasury over the coming decades.

But opposition leaders pounced on Oliver's remark as proof of their claim that the Harper government is making a fiscal mess and sticking future generations with the cost of cleaning it up.

Stephen Harper with Finance Minister Joe Oliver, Tuesday.
JUSTIN TANG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

"Leave it to our grandchildren. Really?" NDP Leader Tom Mulcair told the House of Commons. "I have grandchildren, and like so many grandparents I do not want to leave the responsibility for cleaning up the prime minister's mess to my grandchildren."

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau chimed in: "Since when does Canada burden our grandchildren instead of building for them?"

Harper countered by citing numerous measures contained in Tuesday's budget that he maintained will be of benefit to future generations — including almost doubling to $10,000 the maximum individuals can contribute yearly to their TFSAs.

"Balancing the budget is good for future generations," Harper said. "Giving money to Canadian families so that they can raise their children is good for future generations."

During an interview Tuesday on CBC, Oliver was asked about one economist's estimate that doubling the TFSAs could cost the treasury almost $15 billion within a few decades.

"I hear that by 2080 we may have a problem," Oliver responded. "Well, why don't we leave that to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's granddaughter to solve?"

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Super Bowl ad creators not diverse bunch: Study

While Super Bowl XLIX commercials were more sensitive and less gender-offensive than in past years, women and people of colour remain underrepresented among the creative directors, says a study released Wednesday.

It found that of the 42 Super Bowl ads in 2015 for which data was available, only three featured exclusively a person of colour as the lead creative director. In terms of gender, 81 per cent of the creative directors were male, while 13 per cent of creative directors featured both a male and a female. Only seven per cent were exclusively females.

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, April 23, 2015

Policy deficit hides behind the surplus

POLITICS
Chantal Hébert

In one of his more exuberant moments in the role of Conservative cheerleader, Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney called Tuesday's pre-election budget his "best-seller."

Listening to the Quebec minister on Montreal radio, one could easily picture him clutching the budget to his chest as he spoke.

It is even possible that he slept with the 300-page brick under his pillow. After all, it devotes an entire chapter to his public safety file.

Over the years Blaney's faith in Stephen Harper has been shown to border on religious and he has exhibited a zeal in defending the government's agenda that is second to none among cabinet members.

Still, in this instance, the minister's giddiness reflects the mood of his government colleagues as they fast-forward to the upcoming campaign.

Given a choice, it is a rare MP seeking re-election who would not prefer coming to a voter's doorstep bearing gifts.

Tuesday's budget fulfils most, if not all, of the fiscal commitments undertaken by Harper — starting with a fresh dose of tax relief now that the books are (tenuously?) balanced. Anyone holding out for that promised adult-fitness tax credit should know that it is work in progress ...

For better or for worse the budget reflects the philosophy of the ruling Conservatives.

They will be comfortable selling it on the campaign trail.

But the budget's greatest strength is also its main weakness for it stands to reinforce the very reason why a majority of voters opted to support one of the other parties four years ago.

Those voters were, for the most part, driven to other choices by a deficit of Conservative policy ambition on almost every front — from the environment to social programs — that used to account for a significant part of the mission of past federal governments.

Tuesday's budget compounds that deficit.

The environment is covered by a few paragraphs but the words "climate change" are blatantly absent from its numerous pages.

If anyone remembered that, back in 2005, offering Canadians a wait-time guarantee for medical care was one of the five priorities of the Harper Conservatives, he or she was not in the room when the 2015 budget was drafted.

So entrenched is the government's pro-tax-cut bias after nearly a decade in power that it chooses to offer relief to voters in less-than-pressing need rather than address policy areas in dire need of attention.

And so it is that Canadians who have $10,000 a year to spare on a tax-free savings account (TFSA) get a break, but urban commuters who endure daily traffic jams to get to work would have to wait for the second half of a fourth Conservative mandate before a major federal boost to public transit materializes.

Chances are swing voters still believe in a more activist government than the one Harper is offering.

A wise opposition would spend little time illustrating the fragility of the balancing act that has brought the Conservatives to exhibit a surplus in the budget.

That only undercuts the other parties' already reduced capacity to strike a credible course that is both different from that of the Conservatives and appealing.

The government's budget does paint the picture of steadily increasing budget surpluses — even after the full implementation of the latest round of tax cuts.

Choosing not to implement at least some of those cuts wouldn't necessarily come at great political cost. The government's spending priorities over the longer term are not cast in stone. They are subject to its re-election in the fall.

In the last election Harper made the promises he is now delivering conditional to the government's fiscal performance.

There is no reason why the opposition parties cannot similarly present Canadians with a blueprint designed to live up to the full ambitions of its authors over more than a single budget cycle.

With this budget, the Conservatives are hoping to bring back under their tent the voters who supported them four years ago but have since gone missing in the polls.

Many of them were Liberal sympathizers unhappy with Michael Ignatieff's campaign.

More than a few have come home since Justin Trudeau became party leader.

If they voted for Paul Martin or Jean Chrétien in the past, chances are those swing voters still believe in a more activist government than Harper is offering in this bare-cupboard budget.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer. Her column appears in Metro every Thursday.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
metroview

We don't know their names, but they're still our problem

"I wish I had their names," the caller said.

Ronke from Greenwich was on a U.K. radio show debating controversial Sun columnist Katie Hopkins over the hundreds of thousands of migrants who are increasingly charting a dangerous course over the Mediterranean to reach the shores of Italy, and a life in Europe.

An estimated 800 people from Syria, Eritrea and other countries drowned on the weekend. Only 27 on board the boats survived, according to the UN. European leaders are in Brussels to push through an emergency plan that boosts patrol and rescue operations and increases efforts to settle migrants.

In a column that has sparked calls for her firing, Hopkins compared migrants to cockroaches. "Gun ships," like those deployed to keep migrants out of Australia, is the solution, she wrote.

Her "turn them back" ideology has support in Europe, and it doesn't fall far from the ideology behind our own government's effort to evict about 70,000 longtime migrant workers, so Canadians have first dibs on their jobs.

In the words of New Yorker writer Mattathias Schwartz, referencing illegal immigrants in the U.S., "the goal of Western immigration policy is to keep people out." And clearly it's not working.

"We can't afford at the moment to take on the problems of the world," Hopkins said during that radio call. "I do believe these boats need pushing back."

So simple, isn't it? Except it is, of course, not a solution.

The images of drenched and terrified survivors that covered newspapers this week is about so much more than any one person's desperate attempt to escape horrors at home. It is about colonial pasts, current wars, and corporate greed in countries like Eritrea, where there are allegations of a Canadian mine using forced labour.

It's about Western lifestyles dependent on poor nations with terrible human rights records (think Bangladesh and the garment industry). It is about politics, domestic and international, and identity — what your race and nationality says about where you belong. (An Ekos survey last month found that 41 per cent of Canadians think there are too many visible-minority immigrants.)

Hopkins can delude herself that none of that is an English, or Western, problem. I cannot.

The hundreds who died weren't the first, and they won't be the last. A reported 170,000 people crossed the Mediterranean last year, and more are expected in 2015.

We may never know their names, Katie Hopkins, but that doesn't mean their plight is not our problem.

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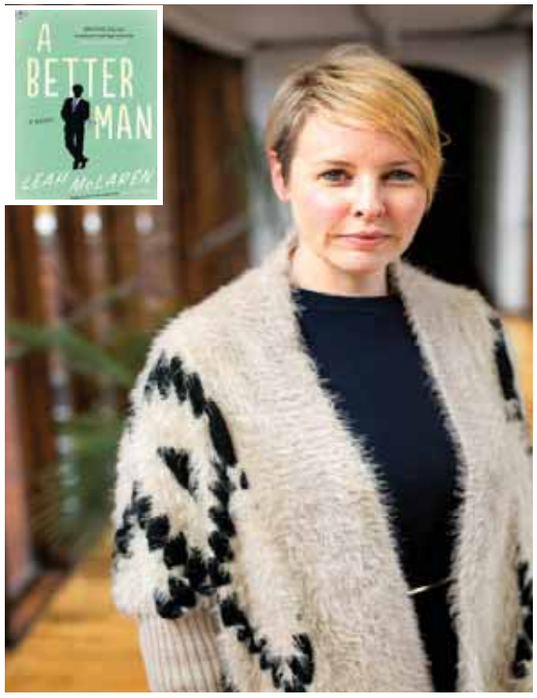
Sandra Bullock is the World's Most Beautiful Woman, according to People Magazine.

McLaren's modern malaise



Leah McLaren's new novel follows the unravelling of a relationship thanks to built-up resentments. LIZ BEDDALL/METRO

NEW NOVEL

Messy marriage tale unearths the roots of resentment

Melita Kuburas
Metro | Life

Leo Tolstoy was wrong when he wrote, "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way" — all unhappy families are alike, too.

At least the families headed by 30-something, urbanite yuppies tend to be.

When the Russian author wrote the famous opening of Anna Karenina, the world hadn't yet been introduced to the troubled marriages of Nick and Amy Dunne in Gillian Flynn's Gone Girl, or, more recently, Nick and Maya Wakefield in Leah McLaren's new novel, A Better Man.

Both books follow the unravelling of a relationship in which two people come to resent one another in a way only former lovers can. In both marriages, that acrimony builds thanks to a blame-game dynamic that's a result of interrupted careers, manipulative personalities, infidelity, and uprooted gender roles.

"Having been in quite a few unhappy relationships, I have to say, it does feel quite similar," laughs McLaren, a London-based journalist who writes a column for the Globe and Mail.

She laughs at the comparison between her book and Flynn's blockbuster, which was turned into a movie last year. "I really hope that this book reminds everyone of Gone Girl, and every single person who bought Gone Girl can buy this book. Then my next divorce would be extremely expensive!" she jokes, during a visit this week to Toronto.

Divorce is the cloud that hovers in A Better Man, released by HarperCollins late last month, as the main character, Nick, suddenly becomes generous with his time and attention — remembering to bring the banana-nut bars during an outing with the kids, and not criticizing his wife's poor choice of wine at dinner.

He pretends to be the perfect husband on the advice of a lawyer — if he gives saving their marriage a college try, his wife, Maya, will be guilt-ridden enough to take it easy on him in their divorce settlement.

The premise is based on an actual trick used by high-billing divorce lawyers, McLaren says.

"It's quite the cynical ruse, but not unheard of in the annals of family law, as horrifying as that might seem," she tells Metro. It's especially not unheard of in London, where the "super rich of the world" have had to divvy up their assets according to England's equitable divorce policy, she adds.

"I wanted to write about that stage of life of being married and having small children, and just how very, very intense it is," McLaren says. "Suddenly there's this crazy intersect, particularly for women, when the biggest years of career coincide with the same years you're supposed to have children. And it's just insane."

Career-driven women who leave their jobs may throw their energy into attachment parenting, as does Maya, an attorney who finds herself traversing between toddler yoga classes, the gym and therapy sessions. She gets her thrill from visiting a posh salon in a gritty neighbourhood, and worries she has become "a hopeless bourgeois cliché — an overeducated, underemployed housewife on the verge of an affair with her personal trainer."

In other words, she's the opposite of "Cool Girl," as ranted against in Flynn's novel by Amy Dunne. "Being the Cool Girl means I am a hot, brilliant, funny woman who adores football, poker, dirty jokes, and burping ..."

Maya's all-consuming, helicopter approach to parenting becomes a turn-off to Nick, who imagines sex with his wife as a kind of "erotic duty."

"Nick and Maya fall into stereotypical gender roles, and that's part of their problem," McLaren says. "There is a real division of labour that happens and as women give birth it will often end up being a woman who then (makes) concessions, career-wise," she says.

The resentments that rise up as a result — her loss of status, his sense of being shut out of the family — turns out to be the book's exploration of what in modern times has become a common problem.

> **He's living a life of distraction. All the women, all the booze, all the work. The beautiful, tailored exterior — it's all just a big sideshow.**
> Leah McLaren, on similarities between her main character, Nick, and Mad Men's Don Draper, another of pop culture's bad husbands

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Not everyone likes their thighs. Some see their forehead as too big and their head too small. Bellies jiggle. Butts wiggle. And guess what? That's okay.

Imperfections don't make you average. They make you human. Cellulite doesn't make you average. It makes you a card-carrying member of womankind. Having your mother's hips and your father's nose when what you really wanted was your father's hips and mother's nose? That doesn't make you average. It makes you, you.

So own it. Embrace it. Flaunt it. And most importantly, love it. Because average will always be a sum of numbers, not body parts. A mathematical mean, not a personal one.

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Time puts its best face forward

WATCHES

Make the latest timepiece trends work with your style

Jesse Ship
Metro | Life

Konstantin Täts (aka @spentologist) is a self-professed watch hoarder who boasts over 25 timepieces in his collection — yet he still can't help checking the time on his phone every once in a while.

Digital technology has become ubiquitous these days from toasters to car engines, and while he's a fan of the innovation of the Apple Watch and newly announced partnerships from the likes of Tag Heuer and Microsoft, Täts, a Toronto-based commercial realtor, will always be in love with the mechanical aspect of his timepieces.

"Every day I put on a watch, no matter what I'm wearing because it can be made to be both luxurious, sporty and fashionable depending on the way you dress it up or down. As well, a watch's movement has a similar beat to our hearts — it's a very natural thing to wear."

To keep up with local collectors, you can follow #RedBarToronto on Instagram and find out about collector meet ups, where watches are laid out for all to touch, try out and enjoy.

"It's a bit of an exclusive club," says Täts, "since sometimes over two million dollars worth of glass are on the table, but if someone wants to attend and they are a watch person, then we can work things out."

We spoke to experts about five of the more interesting watch trends on the market these days, and how to make them work with your look.

1 The Antique Pocket Watch

The owner may have received it passed down by a great-grandfather who hid it who knows where during time spent in the trenches of Gallipoli, or maybe the owner is just be an unabashed steam punk fanatic. Exude an aura of old world sophistication as you adjust your monocle and pull one out from your tweed blazer breast pocket to wind the daily movement.

2 The Mechanical Watch

Like a well-crafted Porsche, a well-maintained mechanical watch will most likely outlive its owner. Some — like the Rolex Paul Newman (starting at $25,000) or Daytona (starting at $10,000), may never go out of style, but for the serious collector, a "grand complication," made of a few hundred parts that takes a year to make is the ultimate get. Owners claim they create a personal bond with the watchmaker by wearing one due to the movement's fine-tuning.

3 The Swatch

Launched in the '80s, Swatch set the Swiss economy back on fire with their low price points, cheery designs and interchangeable straps and faceplates. Despite their plastic bodies, quartz movements, and a plethora of commemorative editions, the populist brand still pushes out sought-after collectable pieces, especially the recent Sistem51 ($150), a mechanical marvel made by a robot, composed of just 51 parts. Sporting a Swatch shows that you're a fun-loving individualist who doesn't take life too seriously.

4 The Trendy Watch

Timepieces with overstated faceplates are bound to get attention and help you stand out from the crowd at the club or in the boardroom. Diesel's ($170-$510) monstrous and metallic shiny bodies, Michael Kors' ($300-$579) signature rose gold and tortoise tones and U.K. newcomer Olivia Burton's ($120 - $230) vintage-inspired faces are snapping up customer sales. The trend is also seeing retail trendsetters like J. Crew teaming up with Timex ($114 - $172) for vintage-inspired military watches with quartz movements to keep the look perpetually in style.

5 The NATO

First introduced to the public by James Bond's Goldfinger (1964) where it was used to secure his Rolex Submariner to his wetsuit, the British military picked up the woven nylon style for their soldiers in the '70s. Today, NATOs have reached mainstream, and interchangeable straps can cost as little as $15 and go up to hundreds as crafty independent designers like Coq Straps and AP Bands have made use of fine leathers and stainless steel components for added personal flair. That might have the watch snob in your life giving the NATO a second glance.

IT'S ALL ON THE WRIST WEARING AN APPLE WATCH FROM DAWN TO DUSK

Apple's first new product in five years — and the company's first wearable gadget — makes its debut today in nine countries, including Canada. Apple Watch (from $449) is worn on your wrist like a regular watch, but Apple's "most personal device we've ever created" goes above and beyond merely telling the time — especially when there's a nearby iPhone 5 or later to unlock its full functionality. A glimpse at how Apple Watch could revolutionize your day. MARC SALTZMAN

7 a.m. Apple Watch's vibrating alarm wakes you – without disturbing your significant other. While getting dressed, you glance at the animated watch face which also shows the current weather and when your first appointment is.

7:45 a.m. Raise your wrist and say "Hey Siri, Workout." Select "Outdoor Run" from the list of exercises, followed by a time, calorie burn or distance goal. Bluetooth headphones let you listen to music playing on the watch. Your watch can calculate your heart-rate after the run.

10:09 a.m. While at the office you feel a tap on your wrist and look at the screen: "BBQ for dinner?" While you could reply with a pre-set answer or dictate a new one, instead you send an animated thumbs-up. While you're at it, tell your watch to remind you to pick up flowers at 5 p.m.

1 p.m. Apple Watch notifies you of an upcoming appointment at a new café. You're not quite sure where it is, so you tap to open the Maps app to get turn-by-turn directions. A call comes in while walking down the street. Answer it on your watch and leave your phone in your pocket.

3:30 p.m. You've been sitting at your desk for a long while, so your wrist buzzes to tell you to stand up and move around a bit. While getting a glass of water from the cooler you check the Activity app on the watch, which shows how close you are to your daily movement goals.

8:05 p.m. Your favourite basketball team is up 20 points at half-time — something your wrist discreetly tells you while taking a walk. A couple of swipes across the screen also shows some email you need to deal with later and a reminder to check into tomorrow's flight to New York.

10:09 p.m. After a relaxing round of Trivia Crack — one of the games you can download to Apple Watch — you realize it's time to charge it up. Attach the magnetic charging "puck" to the back of the watch and plug the other end of the cable into your computer's USB port.

ALL PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED; APPLE WATCH PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS: DAVID VAN DYKE

Breaking free of great expectations

DEBUT

First-time novelist's tale has personal parallels

Liz Brown
Metro | Life

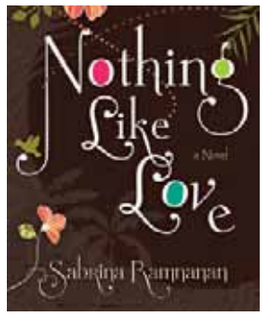
Sabrina Ramnanan says part of her research for her novel was going to Trinidad to just soak in the people, food, sights and smells. CONTRIBUTED

As she wrote her very first novel, Sabrina Ramnanan only had to look to her father when she needed to verify facts about Trinidadian village life in the 1970s. The Toronto-raised daughter of Trinidadian parents, Ramnanan always relished her dad's stories about his life in the Caribbean and visited the island nation herself several times while growing up.

"My dad is a very vivid storyteller. He's almost been prepping me all my life to write this book because he's told me all these wonderful stories and they haven't been written down," she says.

Ramnanan combined the tales of her parents with her own experiences on the island to build a story of forbidden love and a spirited young woman's break from small-town life. That story began as a personal project for the University of Toronto's creative writing certificate program, but soon caught the eye of a senior editor at Doubleday Canada who eventually would offer her a book deal.

"I feel so fortunate," she says, seated at a table in the O&B Canteen on the ground level of Toronto's TIFF Bell Lightbox Theatre. "Who would have known that this story I began working on five years ago — to entertain myself — would be received so well?"



Ramnanan's book, Nothing Like Love, is fast-paced and at times funny. The heroine, Vimla Narine, is an 18-year-old schoolgirl poised for village greatness. She aces her exams and is offered a coveted teaching position, but all that goes awry when it's discovered she's been secretly courting the pundit's son, Krishna Govind. On the surface, the book seems like a typical forbidden love story, but it's more than that. The discovery of Vimla and Krishna's secret affair reverberates through the community and affects a number of people in different ways. "It's really about autonomy," says Ramnanan. "Vimla just wants to do what Vimla wants to do."

The storyline hits autobiographical notes for the 32-year-old Ramnanan. She too, became a teacher. "I thought it was practical," she admits. "There is some of that in Vimla. She does what is expected of her, she gets that teaching post and she gets swept up into it, but does she really want to do it? I don't think so."

Ramnanan says in her heart she always wanted to be a writer, so while working as a supply teacher, she began taking continuing education courses in creative writing. "I became obsessed with the classes because they kept me writing," she says.

Now, with her success — a first novel picked up by a major publisher — she has a new philosophy.

"I think when you do what you know deep down you are supposed to be doing, things work out the way they should. When you do what you're not supposed to do, or what other people think you should do, you come up with all these struggles that you wouldn't have had if you'd just followed your heart."

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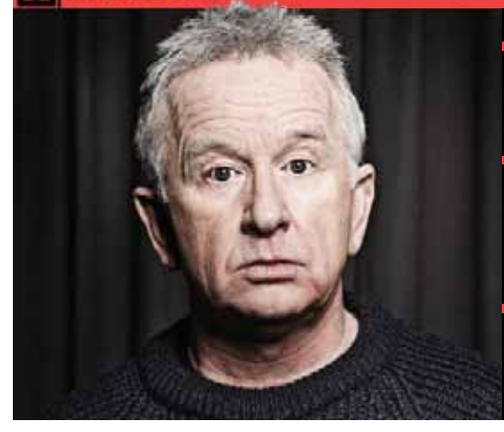

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Tommy turns 30

INTERVIEW

Designer talks brand DNA, his style icons

Tommy Hilfiger says an all-American lifestyle has always been one of his sources of inspiration. As his namesake brand celebrates its 30th anniversary, the designer discusses his success, and his upcoming memoir.

Designer Tommy Hilfiger backstage at Fashion Week in New York City in February. GRANT LAMOS IV/GETTY IMAGES

Rafael Nadal has been named your brand ambassador — can you comment on this?
I'm continuously inspired by his dedication and passion for his sport. Rafael's style is effortless and really exemplifies our brand spirit — he's fun and cool, and doesn't take it too seriously.

Did you think the brand would grow to be this big?
I dreamed of having a globally recognized lifestyle brand but I never could have expected that our company would grow on such an incredible scale. We are very proud that today we have over 1,400 stores in more than 90 countries worldwide.

What is the key for a brand to succeed for so long?
Our signature look celebrates the East Coast Americana lifestyle with a West Coast twist that's laid-back, confident and cool. Our success has come from defining this clear brand DNA and staying true to this heritage, and we love to see how our customers worldwide interpret our designs.

Why is America your main source of inspiration?
I have ... always been drawn to iconic Americana and pop culture; some of my favourite style icons include Steve McQueen, Grace Kelly, James Dean and Jackie O... Each has made a permanent mark in music, film or culture.

What will be in your memoir?
I'll be publishing my memoir in 2016 with Random House. I'll share my stories from all the milestone moments that have defined my career and my personal life. AFP

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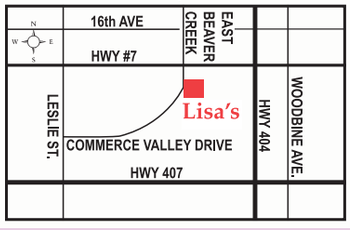

WHEN

April 2015

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May 2015

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CONTROVERSY

Dr. Oz strikes back

Vowing that "we will not be silenced," television's Dr. Oz is fighting back against critics who are trying to get him removed from a faculty position at Columbia University.

Dr. Mehmet Oz will air an episode of his syndicated talk show on Thursday that specifically takes on the group of 10 doctors from around the country who wrote to a Columbia dean about him. The group suggested last week that Oz promotes "quack treatments" of weight loss supplements with no scientific proof that they work.

Oz taped a message previewing his show where he said he knows he has alienated people in "our quest to make America healthy."

But he said freedom of speech is a fundamental right of Americans, and the other doctors are trying to silence him.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dr. Mehmet Oz. GETTY IMAGES

Ben Affleck lobbied the host of Finding Your Roots to not reveal on the program that he had a slave-owning ancestor. GETTY IMAGES

Ben whitewashed slave owner roots

SONY HACK

Star wanted information omitted from PBS program

PBS is conducting an internal review following revelations that producers of Finding Your Roots may have violated the network's editorial standards after a request by Ben Affleck that the program not reveal he had a slave-owning ancestor.

Meanwhile, Affleck has expressed regret for seeking to have the information omitted from the episode that featured the actor and aired last October.

"We deserve neither credit nor blame for our ancestors and the degree of interest in this story suggests that we are, as a nation, still grappling with the terrible legacy of slavery," Affleck posted on his Facebook page Tuesday night.

The review by PBS and New York station WNET began Saturday, according to a statement released Tuesday by PBS spokeswoman Anne Bentley.

"We have been moving forward deliberately yet swiftly to conduct this review," she said.

In his Facebook post, Affleck acknowledges that, initially, "I didn't want any television show about my family to include a guy who owned slaves. I was embarrassed."

He says he lobbied Henry Louis Gates, the Harvard scholar who hosts and produces the show, "the same way I lobby directors about what takes of mine I think they should use."

"It's important to remember that this isn't a news program," Affleck said of Finding Your Roots, which traces the ancestry of well-known guests. Affleck's request came to light last week in hacked Sony emails published online by whistleblower site WikiLeaks.

Gates and PBS said then they didn't censor the slave-owner details. Instead, more interesting ancestors of the actor emerged and Gates chose to highlight them instead.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GOSSIP NOTES

Garfield and Stone's web has permanently unwoven

After dating for more than three years — so basically a decade in Hollywood — Andrew Garfield and Emma Stone went on a "break" two weeks ago. But unfortunately this is no Ross and Rachel situation. According to Us magazine, a source close to the couple says they are done for good. Apparently, Andrew got a little too into character preparing for his role in Silence. "He's been in a dark place for months getting into the role. He wasn't being the best partner," a source tells the magazine. Can someone put this guy in a lighthearted rom-com next? Sheesh!

Jenner fuels speculation over upcoming interview

New photos appear to show former Olympic athlete Bruce Jenner in a striped dress outside his Malibu home. The New York Daily news published the photos a couple of days prior to Jenner's scheduled interview with Diane Sawyer. The interview is believed to be about Jenner's coming out as transgender. The Daily News reports that Jenner has been seen also wearing a sports bra: "A photo of the former Olympic gold medallist wearing what appeared to be a sports bra while riding his Harley Davidson motorcycle emerged Monday, leading many to assume the star had already undergone breast augmentation surgery." ABC will air Jenner's interview on Friday.

Amy Schumer gets no help from Kimye

In other Kardashian-Jenner news, Kim Kardashian and Kanye West totally got punked by Amy Schumer at the Time 100 Gala this week. She fake-tripped in front of the couple on the red carpet and sprawled herself on the ground, face first. Most people might lend a hand and help a girl up, but the couple just kind of stepped over her and carried on. Well, what else would you expect from Kanye, right?

EMILY LAURENCE/METRO NEW YORK

Amy Schumer falls in front of Kanye West and Kim Kardashian at the Time 100 Gala. GETTY IMAGES

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metro HOME
Your essential daily news
Florals are blooming as a spring decor trend.

Lagerfeld has designs on T.O.

INTERIORS

Fashion icon collaborates on Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos

CONDO TRENDS
Duncan McAllister

Designer Karl Lagerfeld checks out the model suite during an invitation-only launch celebration at the Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos in downtown Toronto. BRANDON COMMUNICATIONS

The Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos' terrace (above left), exterior (above right), and courtyard.

An iconic designer label will adorn two residential lobbies at a new midtown condo complex set to occupy the site of the former Art Shoppe showroom at Yonge and Eglinton.

CD Capital Developments and Freed Developments recently announced their exclusive partnership with style icon Karl Lagerfeld, to design the residential lobby spaces at the Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos.

One of the world's most respected fashion legends, Lagerfeld will collaborate with the architectural team and interior designers, Cecconi Simone, to select the features, finishes and furnishings to create "Lobbies by Karl Lagerfeld."

The project marks the designer's first-ever major project in the Canadian market. No stranger to the world of interior design, Lagerfeld has demonstrated his creative flair on the interiors and decor of luxury hotels and private homes around the world.

"What I really like is what I've never done before," says Lagerfeld. "I am always looking for opportunities to expand my range of creative expression, and am excited by the opportunity to design this in Toronto."

Lagerfeld was on hand earlier this month to attend a media event and invitation-only launch celebration in downtown Toronto to kick off the project.

"We searched the world looking for a prolific, iconic celebrity person and when Karl's name surfaced, we felt it was a perfect opportunity." says Jordan Dermer, managing partner of CD Capital Developments.

"Karl's role has been to design both lobbies, to create two very esthetically pleasing jewel boxes, as we like to call them. He will bring tremendous style and sophistication to an existing world-class project," Dermer adds.

The massive complex totals 548,500 sq. ft., of which 80,000 sq. ft. will include retail shops and services on the first two, 20-foot-high levels of a 12-storey podium.

The mixed-use development will encompass an entire city block at 2131 Yonge St. and will be designed by award-winning architect Peter Clewes of architectsAlliance.

The project features a 28-storey residential tower on the north side of the property, stepping down to a 12-storey midrise collection of lofts to the south.

"We just want to express how privileged we feel to have this opportunity to bring such an incredible individual to our city, to help us shape our city," says Peter Freed of Freed Developments.

"How many opportunities do you have in life to take an entire city block in the heart of Toronto and work with an icon like Karl Lagerfeld?"

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Barrington all about location on St. Clair W.

Project overview

The Barrington Condominium Flats is introducing new suite designs and pricing in the prestigious St. Clair residential area, which is undergoing an urban renaissance. With excellent value overlooking scenic Forest Hill, there are two new suite groupings: The London Flats and The Knightsbridge Collection.

Building amenities

Featured is a concierge service, a fifth-floor multi-purpose room with catering kitchen and dining area, and an outdoor terrace with seating and barbecues. There's also a billiards table and multimedia wall in the lounge area. The parking facility will feature Toronto's first automobile elevator.

Location and transit

The Barrington is near the St. Clair West subway, with less than half an hour's ride to downtown Toronto. The building has a walk score of 98 and a bike score of 88 and is located on four streetcar and bus routes.

In the neighbourhood

This rejuvenated community boasts intriguing boutiques and trendy eateries. The nearby Artscape Wychwood Barns offers culture, cuisine, urban agriculture, and a variety of activities and events. The area around The Barrington is dotted with libraries, parks, trails, bike lanes and a multitude of services.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

What: The Barrington Condominium Flats
Builder: Lash Group of Companies and The Goldman Group
Location: 1486 Bathurst St.
Building: 18 storeys, 93 suites
Sizes: 555-2,200 sq. ft.
Pricing: From the low $300,000s
Suites: One bedroom, two bedroom and three bedroom
Status: Selling phase
Sales Centre: 522 St. Clair Ave. W.
Info: 416-410-4444, barringtoncondos.com

ADVICE

Easement on title not a worry

LEGAL MATTERS

Jeffrey Cowan

Q: I recently purchased a home and when my realtor looked it up on the system that he uses to research properties, there was a note on file that there was an easement on title. He indicated to me that we should get that removed when my lawyer does her title search and before we close the property. The closing has come and gone but I think the easement is still on title. I am not sure what an easement is and whether this was something my lawyer should have had removed before we closed.

A: Easements are claims against the title to a property that usually allow for the provision of certain services such as hydro, gas, telephone lines and municipal access to your property to perform upkeep and modification of services. There are thousands of them throughout a municipality and usually they are a permanent note on title.

In this case (I called my reader), the easement was access to the property by the municipal authority to deal with any ongoing drainage issues.

This is something that a city will put in place when new subdivisions are developed and usually they are permanent and cannot be removed from title.

They don't actually detract from the value of the property, they enhance it.

Three areas key to welcome growth

Bryan Tuckey

As the Ontario government continues its review of the Greenbelt and the provincial Growth Plan, I am proud to report that our association has been at the table, working together to build quality, complete communities for our region's growing population.

Our region is expected to grow by 100,000 people and 50,000 jobs who choose to make the GTA their home each and every year for the next 25 years. In order to accommodate this growth, it is important that our industry is able to build about 35,000 new homes each year.

To make this happen, we must focus on three key areas — preserving the Whitebelt for the long-term urbanization of the GTA, removing regulatory barriers and investing in new infrastructure.

The Whitebelt refers to areas within the GTA that are designated for growth. This land is integral to the future growth of our region, and its preservation will help our industry provide the necessary housing supply, improving choice, building employment centres and creating new jobs.

Another key element of the review is the removal of regulatory barriers to intensification. These barriers delay the introduction of new homes into the market, which results in additional costs for new-home buyers.

We need to focus on making growth happen in designated areas. That means ensuring that zoning bylaws are updated to conform to Official Plans.

As the GTA continues to grow at a rapid pace, it is imperative that we invest in new growth-related infrastructure, and have it in place before people move in. Growth is beneficial to our economic prosperity, and it's time to look at infrastructure as an investment instead of a cost.

BILD and its members have been working hard to educate the public on the objectives of the Growth Plan and intensification. It is important to change the conversation and inform all GTA residents about the way their communities are changing, and the reasons behind those changes.

We are all in this together, so let's work together on building a greater GTA.

BRYAN TUCKEY IS PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE BUILDING INDUSTRY AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION AND A LAND-USE PLANNER WHO HAS WORKED FOR MUNICIPAL, REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS. FOLLOW HIM ON TWITTER @BILDGTA, FACEBOOK.COM/BILDGTA, AND BILDBLOGS.CA.

"Growth is beneficial to our economic prosperity, and it's time to look at infrastructure as an investment instead of a cost.

REAL ESTATE

What's hot on the market

DUNCAN MCALLISTER

1 OAKVILLE

Sales event: This week, Empire Communities is offering pre-construction pricing until April 26 at Senses, the 19-storey resort-inspired condominium. View the presentation centre at 521 Kerr St.
CONTACT: 905-845-7246, EMPIRESENSES.COM

2 KING WEST

Open house: A one-bedroom suite at The Fashion House, a brand new King West condo by Peter Freed. Check it out at 560 King St. W., on April 25 and 26, from to 4 p.m.
CONTACT: JONATHAN FERRIER, 416-921-1112

3 DOWNSVIEW

Sales event: The 2800 condominium residences' new sales office is open. Go to 2319 Keele St., in the heart of Downsview. Spacious suites, modern design and close to TTC.
CONTACT: 416-398-2800, LIVEAT2800.COM

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Wallpaper (above and bottom right) designed by street artist Toxic for Pierre Frey. PIERRE FREY

Street art for your own wall

DECORATING

Artist Toxic designs wallpaper for Pierre Frey

The prestigious Parisian wallpaper and fabric maker has teamed with American street artist Toxic for a collaborative collection.

In an exclusive tie-up, Toxic and Pierre Frey have produced fabrics ($312/metre), wallpaper ($295/metre) and a panoramic wall covering (3.5 metres wide and 2.5 metres tall, $1,380), all featuring vibrant colours and abstract, graffiti-style motifs.

There are two patterns available. The first is titled No Toys Allowed, perhaps to indicate that Toxic's career is no longer a game, as it may have been in his formative years. The second motif,

Eighty/Thirty, commemorates the 80th anniversary of the Pierre Frey brand, founded in 1935, and the 30th year of Toxic's career as an artist.

Fittingly, the launch of the collection coincides with a Parisian museum exhibit that includes four of Toxic's paintings. Pressionism, The Masterpieces of Graffiti on Canvas from Basquiat to Bando, 1970-1990 will be on display at the Pinacothèque through Sept. 13.

A key figure on the graffiti scene in 1980s New York, Toxic painted his first works on trains and walls, using art to draw attention to issues such as racial discrimination and violence.

He was friends with other future stars of the movement including Jean-Michel Basquiat, who was later brought into the spotlight in the art world by Andy Warhol, and Rammellzee.

In 2006, the Brooklyn Museum featured Toxic in its Graffiti exhibit, securing his reputation as one of the leading artists in the movement.

Three years later, his work was also featured in Paris at the Fondation Cartier's exhibit Né dans la rue — Graffiti.

This is not the first time Pierre Frey has collaborated with an artist. In September 2014, the brand invited French actress Louise Bourgoin to create a collection. AFP

Street artist Toxic. DOROTHÉE DEMEY/PIERRE FREY

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4 ITEMS THAT STOOD OUT AT THE MILAN FURNITURE FAIR

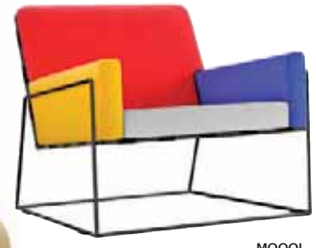
The recent Milan Furniture Fair, the biggest event in interior decorating and design, has presented the latest looks for your living room. Here's an overview of the core components of the family room: the armchair and the sofa, featuring bright colours, a customizable creation and mutant mattress. **AFP**

1 The self-made seat

Frenchwoman **Matali Casset** designed a sofa made from a system of individual modules that can be carried like suitcases for Italian furniture company Campeggi. (Price upon inquiry)

PETITE FRITURE

CAMPEGGI



MOOOI

1 The Charles chair

For Dutch brand **Moooi**, designer Marcel Wanders has created a red, blue, yellow and white armchair that evokes somewhat the work of his compatriot, painter Piet Mondrian.

2 The modular sofa 'Grid'

For **Petite Friture**, a relatively new French design brand, design duo Pool created the "Grid" sofa. Its geometric shaped elements can be arranged as you like. Available in grey, dark blue and mustard or grey, brick and coral, it can be fitted with a semi-circular detachable wooden table. (€2,950, approx. CDN$5,500)

MOROSO

3 The 'Matrizia' sofa

Halfway between sculpture and furniture, the name of this sofa by Ron Arad, "Matrizia," is a combination of the words "mattress" and "Patrizia", the name of the creative director of the brand Patrizia **Moroso**. According to website dezeen.com, the Israeli designer came up with the idea for this "sofa-mattress" after seeing a discarded mattress in the street while out for a walk in New York City.

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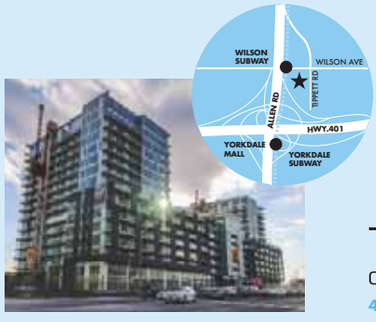

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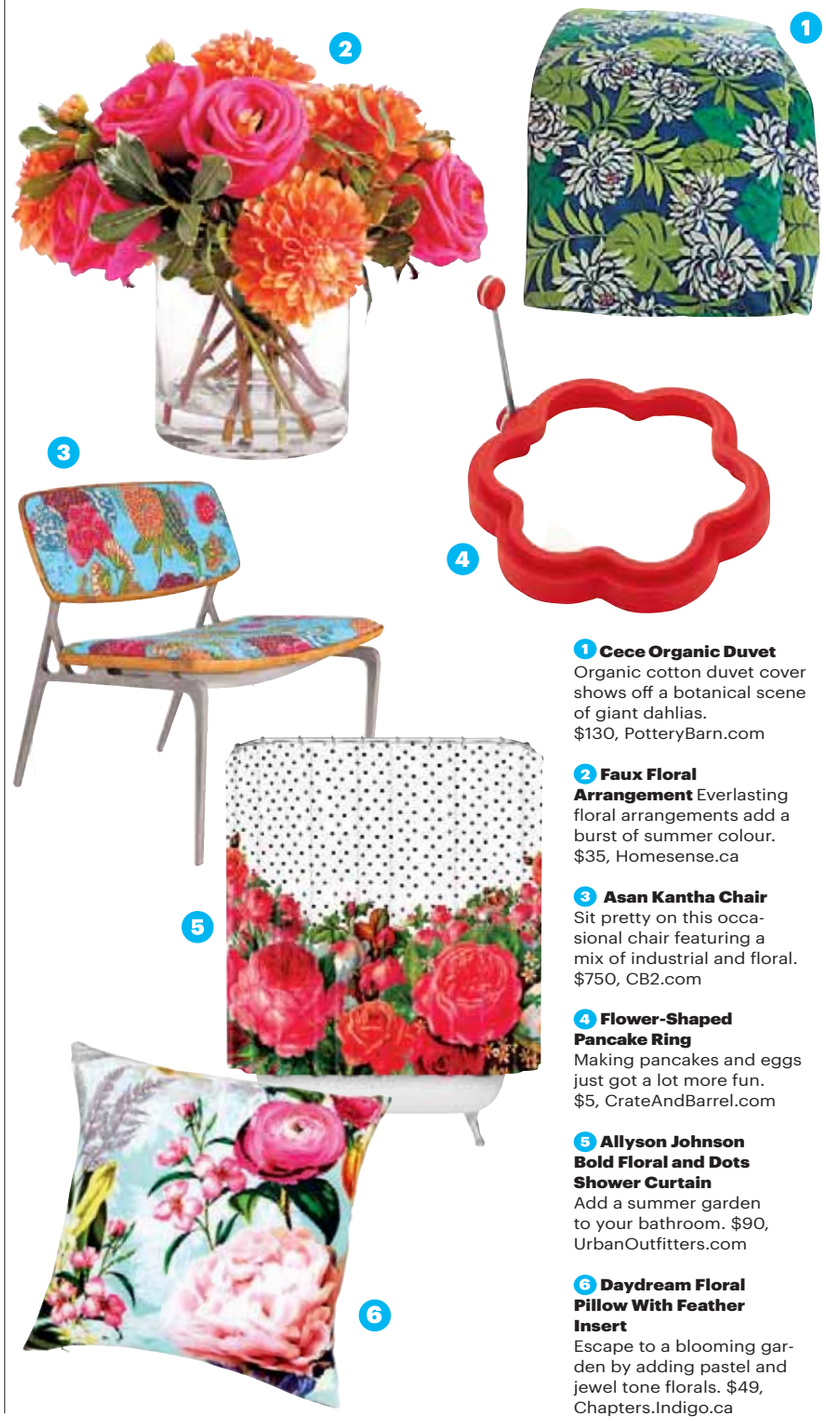
Florals unfurl in spring decor

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes

Punchy, graphic and bright floral patterns offer a pretty, modern edge this spring; let them bloom with these stylish accessories.



1 Cece Organic Duvet
Organic cotton duvet cover shows off a botanical scene of giant dahlias. $130, PotteryBarn.com

2 Faux Floral Arrangement Everlasting floral arrangements add a burst of summer colour. $35, Homesense.ca

3 Asan Kantha Chair
Sit pretty on this occasional chair featuring a mix of industrial and floral. $750, CB2.com

4 Flower-Shaped Pancake Ring
Making pancakes and eggs just got a lot more fun. $5, CrateAndBarrel.com

5 Allyson Johnson Bold Floral and Dots Shower Curtain
Add a summer garden to your bathroom. $90, UrbanOutfitters.com

6 Daydream Floral Pillow With Feather Insert
Escape to a blooming garden by adding pastel and jewel tone florals. $49, Chapters.Indigo.ca

FOUR GENERATIONS UNDER ONE ROOF

Yes you can make your curtains

DIY

Drapes project requires few inexpensive materials

Marianne Hayes
Metro in New York City

One creative, simple way to spruce up your home for spring is to change out heavy curtains for light, airy drapes. The good news is that letting the light in doesn't mean you have to spend a fortune on new decor.

Instead, check out these budget-friendly DIY projects that'll leave your windows looking like they came out of an Anthropologie catalogue.

BALANCING HOME

DOGS DON'T EAT PIZZA

Plain white curtains painted with stencils (left), handwritten curtains (right), and no-sew burlap curtains (topmost photo) are perfect for spring.

Bang from burlap

Burlap isn't necessarily a fabric that traditionally screams spring, but (if done right) it can actually give your living room a crisp, fresh feel. Another kicker? It's a no-sew project that's relatively inexpensive to pull off.

"Our family room had so many windows that I needed to find an inexpensive way to add drapery without breaking the bank!" says Jessica Bruno of Four Generations One Roof. "I purchased burlap for under two dollars a yard and made my own no-sew curtains."

Bruno completed the look with just three and a half yards of burlap, which covered 10 large windows. The finished product is airy and light — perfect for spring. It's also easy to swap out when the seasons change.

For full instructions, go to Fourgenerationsoneroof.com.

Burlap messages

A Sharpie is all you need to pull off this next look, which uses your own handwriting and some creative messaging. Just be sure to use a permanent marker; not a paint pen. Putting a piece of cardboard under the curtains while writing is also a good idea.

"The hardest part is deciding what to write," says Karen Cooper of Dogs Don't Eat Pizza. For her kitchen curtains, Cooper decided to write a variety of cooking-related words (like "bake," "mix" and "stir") in varying cursives and prints.

And if the curtains get dirty over time, washing them won't smudge the writing. Just throw them in the gentle cycle in cold water.

Stencil treatment

Whether your home is ultra-modern or boho chic, printed curtains can help accentuate the tone and feel.

Instead of dropping money at Crate and Barrel, opt for plain cotton drapes from any home store — then kick them up a notch by painting on a cool pattern, using fabric paint and a stencil roller.

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Megan Bray over at Balancing Home says the trick to stencilling is to avoid using too much paint. She also advises putting some muscle into your rolling to produce the best final image.

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metro SPORTS

Anderson Silva will fight for a spot on Brazil's Rio 2016 Olympic taekwondo team

Thursday, April 23, 2015

Lack of urgency 'alarming'

NBA PLAYOFFS

Dinos trail Wizards 2-0 as series shifts to Washington

Wizards point guard John Wall takes to the air to block a shot from the Raptors' Lou Williams on Tuesday night in Toronto.
RICK MADONIK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

It was one of the lowest of the lows for the Toronto Raptors, and the morning after DeMar DeRozan summed it up best.

"If being down 0-2 shouldn't stimulate urgency, then I don't know what would," DeRozan said.

Yet through two dreadful playoff games against the Washington Wizards, they've been missing just that.

The Raptors dropped a horrendous 117-106 decision to the Wizards on Tuesday night, and head to Washington desperate to avoid elimination in four games.

They studied video Wednesday morning and came away with one glaring message.

"I think the most alarming thing we've seen was just our sense of urgency (and lack thereof)," Lou Williams said. "We didn't play with the energy we needed to, we didn't play with the sense of urgency in the situation that we were in, being down 1-0 at home. I felt like we should have competed harder. Games like that don't really come down to Xs and Os, it comes down to guys just wanting to win, and competing. I think they just did a better job than we did."

Kyle Lowry has struggled mightily, a stunning turn of events after he shone in last season's playoffs. The point guard left Tuesday's game with six minutes to go with a leg contusion, and spent Wednesday receiving treatment.

"He's fine, bruise, just his shin," coach Dwane Casey said.

"Obviously he's a little upset at the way he's played so far, with just the foul trouble and everything, but we should see one of his best efforts in the next game," said Williams, who scored a team-high 20 points in Game 2.

DeRozan, who's developed a close bond with Lowry since he signed with Toronto, said this playoff series has been "extremely frustrating" for Lowry.

"Him dealing with foul trouble, dealing with an injury (Tuesday) night, and me knowing him, it's just tough," DeRozan said. "He feels like he's letting us down in a sense, but we've all got to stick together no matter what. If you're not playing well, if you're missing shots, you've still got to stick together and fight through."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL IN BRIEF

Rangers a win away from eliminating Penguins

Kevin Hayes scored at 3:14 of overtime to give the New York Rangers a 2-1 victory over the Pittsburgh Penguins on Wednesday night in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference first-round series.

The Rangers lead the series 3-1 heading back to New York for Game 5 on Friday night.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sens stave off elimination

Mike Hoffman scored in the third period and Craig Anderson made 28 saves for the shutout as the Ottawa Senators downed the Montreal Canadiens 1-0 on Wednesday night to stay alive in their first-round NHL playoff series.

Montreal leads the best-of-seven series 3-1 and can wrap it up on home ice Friday night.

Coach Dave Cameron moved Hoffman, a rookie, from the fourth line, up to the second unit with Mika Zibanejad and Bobby Ryan during the first period.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Senators goalie Craig Anderson made 28 saves in Game 4. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Travis returns to spark Jays past O's

MLB

2nd baseman's two-run blast among his three hits

Rookie second baseman Devon Travis had three hits, including the go-ahead two-run homer, as the Toronto Blue Jays topped the Baltimore Orioles 4-2 on Wednesday.

Travis missed the first game of the series with sore ribs after being hit by a pitch in Toronto's 5-2 loss to the Atlanta Braves on Sunday. Just 14 games into his big-league career, Travis leads the Blue Jays with a .388 average.

WEDNESDAY In Toronto

BLUE JAYS	ORIOLES
4	2

Justin Smoak hit his first home run of the season for Toronto (8-7), while starter Aaron Sanchez (1-2) earned the win. He struck out four but walked seven, allowing two hits and two earned runs over 5-1/3 innings. Rookie Miguel Castro earned his third save of the season.

Shortstop Jimmy Paredes led Baltimore (7-8) with a home run and two RBIs. Starting pitcher Ubaldo Jimenez (1-1), struck out six over five innings, giving up six hits — including two home runs — and four earned runs.

All-star Blue Jays right-fielder Jose Bautista sat out the game with a strained right shoulder that he injured throwing to first base in Tuesday's 13-6 win over Baltimore. He was not expected to play in Thursday's series finale.

Travis's third hit of the night was a two-run shot to centre field, giving the Blue Jays a 4-2 lead in the fifth inning. Jose Reyes started the inning with a single, then Travis brought him home on a splitter from Jimenez.

The Blue Jays will go for the three-game sweep on Thursday at Rogers Centre.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Blue Jays' Devon Travis steals second base ahead of a tag from the Orioles' Ryan Flaherty on Wednesday at Rogers Centre. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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RECIPE Bok Choy Salad with Mandarin Oranges and Ginger Dressing

EAT LIGHT AT HOME

Rose Reisman
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Ready in
Prep time: 15 minutes
Serves: 6

Ingredients
- 6 oz extra firm tofu cut into cubes
- 12 oz baby bok choy, trimmed and sliced
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup fresh or canned and drained mandarin segments
- ¼ cup toasted sliced almonds
- 3 Tbsp chopped cilantro or parsley dressing
- 1/3 cup minced red onion
- 2½ Tbsp vegetable oil
- 2½ Tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 2½ Tbsp water
- 1½ Tbsp ketchup
- 1 Tbsp minced ginger
- 1 Tbsp light soy sauce
- 1½ tsp sesame oil
- 1½ tsp granulated sugar
- 1½ tsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp minced garlic

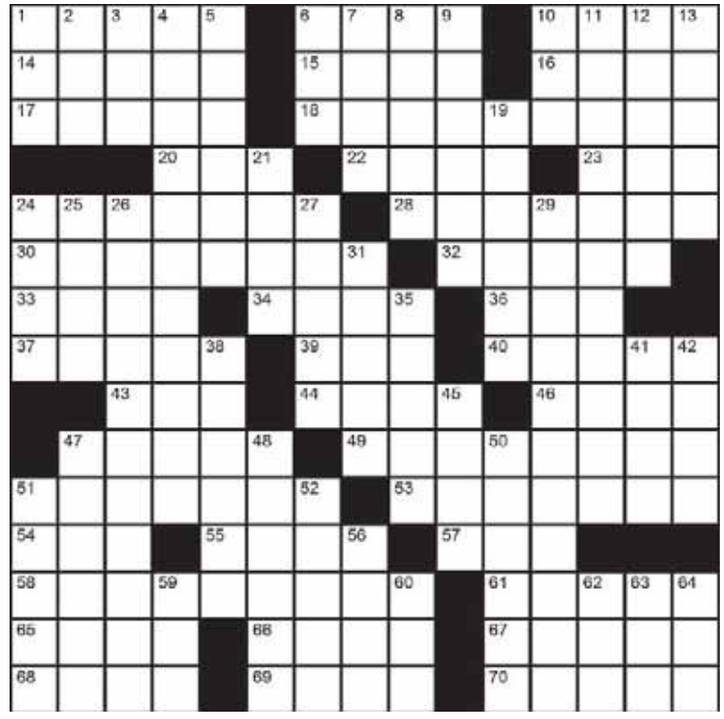
Directions
1. In grill or sauté pan, sear tofu cubes just until browned on both sides, about 5 minutes. Set aside.
2. Place bok choy, green onions, cranberries and mandarins on serving platter. Garnish with almonds and cilantro.
3. Dressing: In small bowl or food processor, puree all ingredients until smooth. Pour over top salad and mix well. Add tofu.

Nutrition per serving
- Calories 186 • Protein 8.6 g
- Carbohydrates 14.0 g
- Fibre 2.2 g • Total fat 11.6 g
- Saturated fat 0.8 g
- Cholesterol 0 g
- Sodium 169 mg

PHOTO: ROSE REISMAN

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Uses the text-thickening function
6. Thunder god
10. First word of Virgil's epic Latin poem Aeneid
14. Streamlet
15. Sulk
16. Casual affirmative
17. Dylan __, "Orphan Black" star
18. Saskatchewan town southwest of Saskatoon
20. One-eighty turn, slangly
22. Eminem's Shady
23. Canuck, curtly
24. Smokestack
28. Growled
30. Kiesza hit
32. "Wavin' Flag" singer
33. 'Konvicted' rapper
34. Chocolate/toffee Hershey bar
36. Don't hire a pro, e.g.
37. U.S. airline
39. U.S. state, e.g.
40. "Happy Days" name
43. Cleveland NBA-er
44. Herman Melville: Captain in Billy Budd, Sailor
46. "Weeell?"
47. "Mack the Knife" singer Bobby
49. "Steal My __" by Canadian group Len
51. Many are exhausted after one: 2 wds.
53. Mr. Cage
54. Prefix meaning 'Outer'
55. Caustics
57. Stock index, with Jones
58. Bugs living under a rock, as an example of one
61. __ and Sara (Music duo from Calgary)
65. Marching instrument
66. Office memo abbr.
67. Prefix meaning 'Rainbow'
68. Gentle
69. British Columbia's __ National Park
70. Plus

DOWN
1. Consumer protection agcy.
2. Lisa __, Canadian etiquette expert
3. "__ Grant"
4. April 23rd to May 3rd, 2015: Canadian International __ Festival, in Toronto
5. British Columbia river
6. Online celeb gossip source
7. Cultivates
8. Some stones
9. Fix a chain, say
10. Ms. Rand
11. Some of Prince Edward Island's 'land'scape is distinguished by it: 3 wds.
12. Fairytale figure
13. Lend __ (Help out)
19. Christopher Plummer's actress daughter
21. Archery bow trees
24. Country of Africa
25. Go backpacking
26. Viewer voting leads to a new one each week on Ryan Seacrest's show: 2 wds.
27. Comedy's Mr. Smirnoff
29. Song by Canadian singer Pagliaro, fitting for April's weather
31. Yesteryears
35. Already-shown show
38. In a keen manner
41. Charlie Chaplin's last wife
42. Negative replies
45. Barenaked Ladies song
47. Rucellai Madonna painter
48. Oppose/reject
50. Nova __
51. Bellyaches
52. Bryan Adams' "The Best Was __ __ Come"
56. Comic actor Mr. Green
59. Kit
60. Telephone trio
62. Soldiers
63. 'Block' suffix
64. Negative word

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Everyone gets things wrong once in a while and you are no exception. If you make an error of judgment today – and you will – don't try to deny it. Accept your mistake then set about putting it right.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
With the Sun in your sign your confidence is high, but you still have a vague feeling that everything could fall apart at any moment. Don't worry, it won't, but your intuition could be telling you something. What could it be?

Gemini May 22 - June 21
This is a time for reflection, a time for looking back over the previous 12 months or so and learning what you can from both your successes and your failures.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Someone who is usually very open with you will be secretive for no good reason today, but don't take it to heart because it is unlikely to have anything to do with you personally.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Anyone who thinks they can take advantage of your trusting nature will soon learn that you are not so easily deceived. Trusting you may be, but stupid you are not – as they will find out to their detriment today.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If your intuition tells you to follow a certain course of action then do so even if everyone else thinks you are mad. Listen to that little voice inside your head – and close your ears to everything else.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
If you ask someone for a favor today chances are they will be more than willing to help you out. But don't expect to get what you want for free.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Personal problems may seem much bigger than they actually are at the moment, so wait until the weekend before making important decisions.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You have so much to do but time is limited, so don't waste even a second on things that are not connected to your long-term ambitions.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Seize the initiative today and let everyone around you know that you intend to take what it is you desire rather than wait for others to give it to you. The Sun in Taurus makes all things possible.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Don't be surprised if you feel a bit moody today, even though most things in your life appear to be going well at the moment. You will be back to your normal self come the weekend.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You don't need to pound rivals into submission, not when your way with words is such that you can sweet talk them into doing whatever it is you desire. Whether your words are sincere is another matter entirely, of course.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

		8		1		7		
	6						9	
9				4				3
			9		7			
2		3				1		6
			2		1			
5				9				4
	1						6	
		4		8		5		

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CITY: 11.6L/100 KM▼

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®/™The Hyundai names, logos, product names, feature names, images and slogans are trademarks owned by Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. ‡Dealer Invoice Price of $14,591/$16,308/$24,575/$23,419/$27514 available on all new 2015 Accent 5-Door L Manual/Elantra Sedan L Manual/Sonata GL Auto/Tucson GL FWD Manual/Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD models and includes price adjustments of $636/$719/$1,252/$473/$1,313. Prices include Delivery and Destination charges of $1,595/$1,595/$1,695/$1,760/$1,795, fees, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA and license fees. Delivery and Destination charge includes freight, P.D.E. and a full tank of gas. *The customer prices are those reflected on the dealer invoice from Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. The dealer invoice price includes a holdback amount for which the dealer is subsequently reimbursed by Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. ΩPrice adjustments of up to $636/$719/$1,252/$473/$1,313 available on all new 2015 Accent 5-Door L Manual/Elantra Sedan L Manual/Sonata GL Auto/Tucson GL FWD Manual/Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD models. Price adjustments applied before taxes. Offer cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available offers. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. †Finance offers available O.A.C. from Hyundai Financial Services based on a new 2015 Accent 5-Door L 6-speed Manual/Elantra L 6-speed Manual/Sonata GL Auto/Tucson GL FWD Manual/Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD with an annual finance rate of 0%. Weekly payments are $40/$45/$68/$64/$76 for 84 months. $0 down payment required. Cost of Borrowing is $0. Finance offers include Delivery and Destination of $1,595/$1,595/$1,695/$1,760/$1,795, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Finance offers exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, and license fees. Financing example: 2015 Accent 5-Door L Manual for $14,591 at 0% per annum equals $40 weekly for 84 months for a total obligation of $14,591. $0 down payment required. Cash price is $14,591. Cost of Borrowing is $0. Finance example includes Delivery and Destination of $1,595, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Finance example excludes registration, insurance, PPSA and license fees. No Charge Hybrid Offer: °Purchase or lease a new 2015 Sonata Hybrid and you will be entitled to a $2,000 factory to dealer credit. The manufacturer's estimated retail value for Sonata Hybrid Offer is $2,000. Factory to dealer credit applies before taxes. Offer cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available credits. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. No Charge Hybrid Offer not available on the 2015 Sonata Hybrid Limited or Limited with Technology, or the 2015 Sonata GL Auto, Sport, Sport with Technology, Limited, 2.0T or 2.0T Ultimate. ♦Price of models shown: 2015 Accent GLS Auto/Elantra Limited/Sonata Sport 2.0T/Tucson Limited AWD/Santa Fe Sport Limited AWD are $21,277/$26,927/$32,943/$35,892/$41,577. Prices include Delivery and Destination charges of $1,595/$1,595/$1,695/$1,760/$1,795, levies and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA and license fees. ▼Fuel consumption for new 2015 Accent GLS (HWY 6.3L/100KM; City 8.9L/100KM); 2015 Elantra Limited(HWY 6.7L/100KM; City 9.7L/100KM); 2015 Sonata GL Auto (HWY 6.7L/100KM; City 9.8L/100KM); 2015 Tucson Limited AWD (HWY 9.3L/100KM; City 11.6L/100KM);2015 Santa Fe Sport Limited AWD (HWY 9.8L/100KM; City 12.9L/100KM); are based on Manufacturer Testing. Actual fuel efficiency may vary based on driving conditions and the addition of certain vehicle accessories. Fuel economy figures are used for comparison purposes only. ΔThe Hyundai Accent/Elantra received the lowest number of problems per 100 vehicles among small/compact cars in the proprietary J.D. Power 2014 Initial Quality Study℠ (IQS). Study based on responses from 86,118 new-vehicle owners, measuring 239 models and measures opinions after 90 days of ownership. Propriety study results are based on experiences and perceptions of owners surveyed in February-May 2014. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com. °‡†♦Ω*Offers available for a limited time and subject to change or cancellation without notice. Dealer may sell for less. Inventory is limited, dealer order may be required. Visit www.hyundaicanada.com or see dealer for complete details. ††Hyundai's Comprehensive Limited Warranty coverage covers most vehicle components against defects in workmanship under normal use and maintenance conditions.